

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10-12, 14, and 17-22 were rejected, and the remaining claims were objected to. Claims 2, 3, 6, 21, and 23 have been cancelled, and claims 1, 5, 7-11, 15, 16, 20, 24 and 25 have been amended herein. Accordingly, claims 1, 4, 5, 7-20, 22, and 24-25 remain active in the application. In view of the claim amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicated that claims 3, 6-9, 13, 15-16, and 23-25 were objected to as dependent on rejected base claims, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Note: the Office Action Summary lists claims 23-25 as rejected, but this is assumed to be a typographical error since the body of the Office Action indicates these claims are allowable if rewritten, and contains no rejection directed at claims 23-25). The amendments to the claims raise no new issues, but merely accomplish rewriting necessary to place the objected-to claims in a form amenable to issuance.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate all of the limitations of claims 2 and 3, and therefore claim 1 now reflects allowable previous claim 3 rewritten in independent form. Claim 4 depends from the now allowable claim 1, and should be allowable as well.

Applicant has amended claim 5 to incorporate all of the limitations of claim 6, and therefore claim 5 now reflects allowable previous claim 6 rewritten in independent form. Claims 7-14 and 17-19 each depend directly or indirectly from now allowable claim 5, and should be allowable as well.

Applicant has amended claims 15 and 16 to rewrite them in independent form including the limitations of prior claims 5 and 14.

Applicant has amended claim 20 to incorporate all of the limitations of claim 23, and therefore claim 20 now reflects allowable previous claim 23 rewritten in independent form. Claims 22 and 24-25 depend from now allowable claim 20, and should be allowable as well.

Applicant notes that the Examiner has indicated some reasons for allowance. In Applicant's view, other reasons exist as well.

Section 103(a) Rejections

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 10-12, 14, and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations of prior art references. Applicant's actions have the effect of canceling the rejected independent claims, and renumbering applicable rejected dependent claims to depend instead from allowable claims. Accordingly, the amendments moot these grounds of rejection.

Applicant does wish to add that, regrettably, it appears from the Examiner's remarks that the Examiner misunderstood Applicant's arguments regarding the teachings missing from the prior art. Applicant still traverses these rejections, but elects to cancel the rejected subject matter in this application and pursue that subject matter in a continuation, so as not to delay issuance of the allowable subject matter.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 4, 5, 7-20, 22, and 24-25 of the application as amended is solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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